Headquarters U.S. Air Force

Integrity - Service - Excellence

Contracting Officer Duties and Responsibilities

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REFERENCES

- **FAR 1.6**

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OVERVIEW

- Contracting Officer (CO)
  - Authority & Responsibilities
  - Application
  - Selection
  - Termination
  - Additional Considerations
  - Fictional Scenario
- Enhance understanding of what the Contracting Officer “brings to the table”

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CO Authority

- **FAR 1.602-1**
  - **To enter into, administer, or terminate contracts and make related determinations and findings**
  - **CO's may bind the Government only to the extent of the authority delegated to them**
  - **No contract shall be entered into unless the CO ensures that all requirements of law, executive orders, regulations, and all other applicable procedures, including clearances and approvals, have been met**

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CO Responsibilities

- **FAR 1.602-2**
  - **CO's are responsible for ensuring performance of all necessary actions for effective contracting, ensuring compliance with the terms of the contract, and safeguarding the interests of the United States in its contractual relationships**

CO Responsibilities (Cont)

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- **FAR 1.602-2**
  - **In order to perform these responsibilities, contracting officers should be allowed wide latitude to exercise business judgment. Contracting officers shall --**
    - **Ensure that the requirements of 1.602-1(b) have been met, and that sufficient funds are available for obligation;**
    - **Ensure that contractors receive impartial, fair, and equitable treatment; and**
    - **Request and consider the advice of specialists in audit, law, engineering, transportation, and other fields, as appropriate**

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Application

- **Contracting officers shall receive from the appointing authority (see FAR 1.603-1) clear instructions in writing regarding the limits of their authority**
  - **Required per subsection 414(4) of title 41, United States Code**
- **Information on the limits of the contracting officers' authority shall be readily available to the public and agency personnel**

Selection

- **FAR 1.603-2**
  - **In selecting CO's, the appointing official shall consider the complexity and dollar value of the acquisitions to be assigned and the candidate's experience, training, education, business acumen, judgment, character, and reputation**
  - **Examples of selection criteria include --**
    - **Experience in Government contracting and administration, commercial purchasing, or related fields;**
    - **Education/special training in business administration, law, accounting, engineering, or related fields;**
    - **Knowledge of acquisition policies and procedures, including this and other applicable regulations;**

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Selection (Cont)

- **FAR 1.603-2**
  - **Examples of selection criteria include --**
    - **Specialized knowledge in the particular assigned field of contracting; and**
    - **Satisfactory completion of acquisition training courses**

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Appointment

- **FAR 1.603-3**
  - **CO's shall be appointed in writing on an SF 1402, Certificate of Appointment, which shall state any limitations on the scope of authority to be exercised, other than limitations contained in applicable law or regulation**
  - **Appointing officials shall maintain files containing copies of all appointments that have not been terminated**

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Appointment (Cont)

- **FAR 1.603-3**
  - **Agency heads are encouraged to delegate micro-purchase authority to individuals who are employees of an executive agency or members of the Armed Forces of the United States who will be using the supplies or services being purchased**
    - **Individuals delegated this authority are not required to be appointed on an SF 1402, but shall be appointed in writing in accordance with agency procedures**

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Termination

- **FAR 1.603-4**
  - **Termination of a CO appointment will be by letter, unless the Certificate of Appointment contains other provisions for automatic termination**
    - **Terminations may be for reasons such as reassignment, termination of employment, or unsatisfactory performance**

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Additional Considerations

- **CO's are legal agents of the Govt. and should conduct all business to be within the best interest of the Govt.**
- **CO's responsibility to work with members of the acquisition community either as part of an IPT or as an independent advisor to provide legal, proper and knowledgeable contracting advice and sound business judgment**

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FICTIONAL SCENARIO

- **You arrive at LA AFB and have held a CO warrant for the last 8 years in operational contracting**
- **Should and would SMC/PK issue you a CO warrant?**

- **Questions**